



A relationship
is no place for
VIOLENCE

What are the warning signs of dating violence?

Abuse can be physical, sexual, verbal or emotional. Just because a person isn't physically hurting you doesn't mean they aren't abusing you. Violence and abuse have no place in a relationship. Dating violence or violence in any relationship is not about love or caring. It's about one person trying to control another person.

TRY TO LISTEN TO YOUR INNER FEELINGS

- Trust your instincts if you feel uncomfortable or threatened.
- If you're feeling uncomfortable or frightened in a situation, call a friend or family member to come get you.

Is your partner abusive?

ANSWERING THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS MAY HELP YOU DECIDE:

1. Does your partner insult or make fun of you?
2. Does your partner think their feelings are more important than yours?
3. Is your partner jealous when you want to see your family, friends or be in certain social situations?
4. Does your partner ever try to get you drunk or high?
5. Has your partner ever thrown things, hit, kicked, shoved, strangled or grabbed you?

6. Do you often apologize or make excuses for your partner's behavior especially when they have treated you badly?
7. Are you afraid to break up with your partner because they have threatened to hurt you or themselves?
8. Has your partner forced you to have sex or perform any sexual acts when you didn't want to?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, it may be time to check your relationship. Perhaps you have safely escaped from a violent relationship but are still dealing with the pain. In either situation, there is confidential help and information.

Call the NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE number at **1-800-799-7233 (TDD 1-800-787-3224)** or your domestic violence program 24 hours a day.

What are my rights?

You have the right to:

- say no
- change your mind
- have control over your own body
- set your own limits and have those limits respected
- not be physically, sexually, verbally or psychologically hurt by anyone - friends, family members, dates or strangers
- ask for help when you need it
- pursue your own interests
- be friends with anyone you choose
- break up and fall out of love with someone and not feel afraid

How can I help a friend?

It's important not to ignore the abuse! Here is some information to remember if you are helping a friend who is experiencing abuse:

1. **LISTEN.** Give your undivided attention. Let them know that you have heard what they said.
2. **BELIEVE.** Believe what they are telling you. It has taken a great deal of strength and courage for your friend to tell you.
3. **DO NOT JUDGE.** Be careful not to make judgments about decisions they have made or the situation they're in.
4. **TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY ARE SAYING.** Devote your efforts to understanding the thoughts, feelings and experiences they have chosen to share with you - not to finding out what you want to know.
5. **BE SUPPORTIVE.** Support their feelings and their choice to share them with you and acknowledge that it may have been difficult to do so.
6. **REMIND THEM THAT THEY ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VIOLENCE OR ABUSE.** They may feel that they have done something wrong, but explain to them that the abuser is the one at fault.
7. **SUPPORT THEIR RIGHT TO MAKE THEIR OWN CHOICES.** Sometimes we think we know what is best. Remember that they have the right to make their own decisions.
8. **PROVIDE RESOURCE INFORMATION.** Give them the telephone number of a local domestic violence program or the NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE number at **1-800-799-7233 (TDD 1-800-787-3224)**. It's available 24 hours a day and is confidential.
9. **EDUCATE YOURSELF.** Understand the dynamics of dating violence and the options that are available.
10. **PROTECT PRIVACY.** Protect your friend's privacy. They have chosen to share with you. It's not your place to tell others.

Dating violence:
Physical and sexual assault
are crimes.

To learn more, call your
local domestic violence program.

For web access, log onto
www.mfia.state.mi.us/CFSAdmin/dv/domestic_violence.html

Call the
National Domestic Violence Hotline
1-800-799-7233 (TDD 1-800-787-3224)
24 hours a day for confidential help and information.



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Jean Kordenbrock, Executive Director



John Engler, Governor
James K. Haveman, Jr., Director

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